

HORIUCHI -- 10/813,114
Client/Matter: 009270-0308987

IN THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) A sheet take-out apparatus comprising:
a sheet-feeding member on which sheets are placed;
an air spout unit to spout out air toward a right or left side of a front portion of said sheets with respect to a taking-out direction of said sheets;
a take-out unit to take out a sheet from said sheets in ~~a predetermined~~ the taking-out direction; and
a depression member to depress said sheets against said sheet-feeding member on a rear edge-side portion of said sheets located behind a central portion ~~portion~~ of said sheets with respect to the taking-out direction of ~~said take-out unit~~.
2. (Currently Amended) A sheet take-out apparatus according to ~~Claim~~ claim 1, wherein said air spout unit is an air nozzle provided in a vicinity of said take-out unit.
3. (Currently Amended) A sheet take-out apparatus according to ~~Claim~~ claim 2, wherein said air spout unit includes first and second air nozzles provided on both sides of the sheets placed on said sheet-feeding member.
4. (Currently Amended) A sheet take-out apparatus comprising; according to Claim 3,
a sheet feeding member on which sheets are placed;
an air spout unit to spout air toward said sheets placed on said sheet-feeding member;
a take-out unit to take out a sheet from said sheets in a predetermined taking-out direction; and
a depression member to depress said sheets against said sheet-feeding member on a rear portion of said sheets located behind a central portion of said sheets with respect to the taking-out direction.
wherein said air spout unit ~~further~~ includes a first, second and third air nozzle nozzles spouting out air toward both sides of said sheets, provided on a rear edge-side of the sheets

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that is farther from said take-out unit than a place of said first air nozzle and second air nozzles being provided in a vicinity of said take-out unit, said third air nozzle being provided rearwardly of said first and second air nozzles with respect to the taking-out direction.

5. (Currently Amended) A sheet take-out apparatus comprising:
a sheet-feeding member on which sheets are placed;
an air spout unit to spout out air toward a right or left side of a front portion of said sheets with respect to a taking-out direction of said sheets depressed by said depression member;
a take-out unit to take out a sheet from said sheets toward which said air spout unit spouts the air in the taking-out direction; and
an air jet nozzle to depress said sheets against said sheet-feeding member on a rear edge-side portion of said sheets located behind a central portion portion of said sheets with respect to a the taking-out direction of said take-out unit; direction.

6. (Currently Amended) A sheet take-out apparatus according to Claim claim 5, wherein a pointed end of said air jet nozzle is provided on a rear edge-side portion of said sheets that is farther from said take-out unit than the center of said sheets placed on said sheet-feeding member.

7. (Currently Amended) A sheet take-out apparatus comprising:
a sheet-feeding member on which sheets are placed;
an air spout unit to spout out air toward a right or left side of a front portion of said sheets with respect to a taking-out direction of said sheets depressed by said depression member; and
a take-out unit having a take-out rotor to take out a top sheet and a reverse rotation rotor that rotates in reverse with respect to said take-out rotor and returns excessive sheets taken from said sheets to said sheet-feeding member; and
a depression member to depress said sheets against said sheet-feeding member on a rear edge-side portion of said sheets located behind a central portion portion of said sheets with respect to a the taking-out direction of said take-out unit.

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8. (Currently Amended) A sheet take-out apparatus according to ~~Claim~~ claim 7, wherein said take-out rotor and said reverse rotation rotor each are provided with surfaces in which suction holes are defined to suck a sheet from said sheets.

9. (Currently Amended) A sheet take-out apparatus according to ~~Claim~~ claim 8, wherein a friction coefficient of said surface of said take-out rotor is larger than that of said surface of said reverse rotation rotor.

10. (Currently Amended) A sheet take-out apparatus comprising:
a sheet-feeding member on which sheets are placed;
guide members provided on both sides of the ~~sheet~~ sheets placed on said sheet-feeding member to adjust a position of said sheets in a width direction thereof;
an air spout unit to spout out air toward a right or left side of a front portion of said sheets with respect to a taking-out direction of said sheets ~~depressed by said depression member~~;
a take-out unit to take out a sheet from said sheets ~~toward which the air is spouted in the taking-out direction~~; and
a depression member to depress said sheets against said sheet-feeding member on a ~~rear-edge side~~ portion of said sheets located behind a central ~~portion~~ portion of said sheets with respect to a the taking-out direction of said take-out unit.

11. (Currently Amended) A sheet take-out apparatus according to ~~Claim~~ claim 8, wherein said air spout unit is attached to said guide members.

12. (Currently Amended) A method of taking out a sheet from stacked sheets comprising:
placing stacked sheets on a sheet-feeding member;
spouting out air toward a right or left side of a front portion of said stacked bundle of sheets with respect to a taking-out direction of said sheets;
taking out a sheet from said stacked bundle of sheets ~~toward which the air is spouted in the taking-out direction~~; and

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depressing said stacked ~~bundle of~~ sheets against said sheet-feeding member on a rear ~~edge-side~~ portion of said sheets located behind a central ~~petion~~ portion of said ~~depressed~~ stacked sheets with respect to a the taking-out direction of said ~~take-out~~ unit.